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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DUTCH CABINET APPROVES IRAQ STABILIZATION FORCE  
DEPLOYMENT

11. (SBU) ON JUNE 6 THE DUTCH CABINET APPROVED THE DEPLOYMENT OF DUTCH MARINES AND ASSOCIATED UNITS TO SERVE AS PART OF THE BRITISH DIVISION IN THE STABILIZATION FORCE IN IRAQ. THE CABINET WILL ADVISE THE DUTCH PARLIAMENT IN WRITING OF ITS DECISION AND PARLIAMENT WILL DEBATE THE MATTER IN 8-9 DAYS. PARLIAMENTARY CONCURRENCE IS EXPECTED (ALL MAJOR DUTCH POLITICAL PARTIES SUPPORT THE DEPLOYMENT). THE DUTCH WILL SEND UP TO 1100 PERSONNEL INCLUDING A "BATTALION PLUS" OF ROYAL DUTCH MARINES, THREE TO FOUR CHINOOK HELICOPTERS, ENGINEERING AND MEDICAL UNITS AS WELL AS MILITARY POLICE TO AL MUTHANNA PROVINCE. THESE UNITS ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN COUNTRY BY MID-JULY, AND COMMENCING OPERATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST. MFA OPERATIONS OFFICE DEPDIR JOOST FLAMAND (PROTECT) INFORMED ACTING POLCOUNS THAT THE DUTCH ARE STILL DISCUSSING WITH THE UK THEIR REQUEST FOR ONE OR TWO BRITISH LIAISON OFFICERS TO BE DEPLOYED AT THE DUTCH HEADQUARTERS (EXPECTED TO BE LOCATED IN AL-SAMAWAH) TO ADDRESS CERTAIN "CIVIL" TASKS. (NOTE: THE DUTCH ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR TROOPS BEING IDENTIFIED AS PART OF THE OCCUPYING POWER AS WELL AS HAVING THEIR BATTALION COMMANDER BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR CIVIL ADMINISTRATION DECISIONS.) THE DUTCH CABINET ALSO APPROVED ON JUNE 6 THE SECONDMENT OF FOUR DUTCH OFFICERS TO SERVE IN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE POLISH DIVISION IN IRAQ.

12. (SBU) COMMENT: THE PROMPT DECISION OF THE NEW CABINET (INAUGURATED ON MAY 27) REFLECTS ITS DETERMINATION TO HAVE DUTCH FORCES CONTINUE TO PLAYING A ROLE IN GLOBAL SECURITY OPERATIONS FOLLOWING ITS COMMITMENTS TO OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN. END COMMENT.  
SOBEL